

Results Report for the Potomac and Sterling Communities

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Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach

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Executive Summary

In February of 2008, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (the Board) initiated the Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project. The purpose of the project was three-fold: 1.) to engage a diverse and large cross-section of the citizens and stakeholders within the communities of Potomac and Sterling in a public dialogue to capture their key issues and concerns, along with their suggested opportunities and solutions; 2.) to ensure a collaborative and “citizen-driven” approach where the issues and topics are defined by the citizens and stakeholders participating in the process; and, 3.) to report the results of the public dialogue back to the Board to assist them in future decision-making efforts in Potomac and Sterling. This report summarizes the input received and ideas and solutions offered by citizens on the Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project.

Outreach efforts were conducted in a number of ways. More than 300 people participated in four public meetings. Two sessions were held in the Potomac Community (River Bend and Seneca Ridge Middle Schools) and two in the Sterling Community (Park View High School) at different dates and times in order to give citizens flexibility in their attendance. The Potomac/Sterling Community Survey was released to the public on April 22, 2008. The survey was open for a period of 40 days, closing on May 31, 2008. The survey solicited public input to supplement the information gathered at the public sessions and provide an alternate means for the public to provide comments. The survey captured citizens’ key issues and concerns, their ideas for addressing these concerns, and their perceptions of key community assets. The survey was available on the Internet and at three public facilities – Cascades Library, Sterling Library, and Claude Moore Park. In keeping with the primary goal of the effort to reach as many people as possible, stakeholder meetings and roundtables were held with various groups to ensure a diverse cross-section of the public was included in the input. Lastly, citizens and stakeholders were able to provide written comments via e-mail.

The report is organized into four sections: *Introduction*, which includes an overview of the Potomac and Sterling Community and the project’s relationship to the County’s Revised General Plan; *Project Process*, which provided information on the activities taken to date; *Preliminary Results*, which provides a summary of the comments provided by stakeholders, including their Major Assets, Key Issues, and Opportunities and Solutions; and *Conclusions and Next Steps*.

Overall, the findings suggest that what stakeholders most value within their neighborhoods and the larger community are: 1.) proximity and accessibility to jobs, services, and retail, 2.) a sense of community, 3.) the amount and quality of the area’s parks, trails, and open spaces, and 4.) the quality of public schools and libraries.

Key issues of concern affecting the neighborhoods and communities include: 1.) decline in the appearance and conditions of neighborhoods and housing, 2.) increase in crime and gangs, 3.) transportation congestion and lack of connectivity, 4.) community change due to the influx of ethnic groups and illegal immigrants, and 5.) overcrowding.

Stakeholders also suggested opportunities and solutions to address many of the key issues identified above. From these comments, eight themes are emerging: neighborhood and housing revitalization; transportation and land use corridor improvements; expanding and enhancing transportation choices; economic development; development patterns, housing affordability and diversity; community facilities and programs; parks and open space and environment.

Since the release of the “Preliminary Results Report” in July 2008, the Department of Planning continued to conduct roundtables with stakeholder groups as part of the “report-back” on the preliminary report to ensure that the communities’ sentiment has been captured. This report provides an overview of the Community Survey and its final results. Additional details of the survey are provided in Attachment 1. The final report to the Board of Supervisors includes a number of action-oriented recommendations that are in line with the citizen issues raised throughout the outreach effort.

Copies of project documents and materials are available for review in the Loudoun County Department of Planning and on-line at www.loudoun.gov/potomac-sterling.

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I. Introduction

Background

Loudoun County is one of this nation's fastest growing counties. Attracted by its beautiful scenery, and proximity to Dulles International Airport and Washington D.C., the population of Loudoun County has grown by 100,000 people since 2000 to today's population of over 270,000. The growth experienced in the last seven years is expected to continue, though not at the same pace - increasing by 29% in the next 10 years to over 350,000 residents.

Three major events spanning three decades helped to open the communities of Potomac and Sterling to residential development: the installation of utilities, including a major interceptor sewer leading to the Blue Plains Treatment Plant in 1959; the 1962 opening of Washington Dulles International Airport on what was 10,000 acres of open farmland; and road expansion on Routes 7 and 28 in 1971 and 1988 respectively.

Amidst this growth stand two of the county's oldest and most diverse communities - the Potomac and Sterling Communities of eastern Loudoun County. From the establishment of Guilford Station in 1860 – a railroad stop and commerce center for Old Sterling – the area east of the Broad Run to the Fairfax County line has transformed itself from its 18th and early 19th century agricultural heritage to mature communities including Sterling Park, Sugarland Run, and Countryside. These two communities are now defined by neighborhoods old and new offering a variety of housing choices, numerous trails and recreational opportunities, and proximity to a wide range of retail and service options. Although the area's communities are largely built-out, they still contain 27% of the County's growing population. The area contains two critical transportation corridors - Routes 7 and 28. Situated along these two corridors are businesses such as NeuStar and Orbital Sciences that have established Loudoun County's reputation as an international center for technology, communications and transportation. Route 28, perhaps the County's most visible and heavily traveled north-south roadway, is expected to continue its role as a major economic engine for Loudoun County. Much of the land area planned for multi-story class A office along the Route 28 corridor still remains undeveloped.

Like many other maturing neighborhoods, the two communities are facing several challenges not yet evident in the rest of eastern Loudoun County. In a county where the sales price of a single family detached home averages approximately \$590,000, this area's diverse housing styles and choices can offer affordability to

many working families. Affordability can be reflective of the age and style of housing and the Potomac and Sterling Communities contain some of the oldest housing stock in the County, which is leading to concerns by many residents about deteriorating housing conditions and property values. Exacerbating this concern are two factors: current housing market forces impacting property values and the large number of foreclosures and subsequent vacancies resulting from families caught up in the mortgage-financing catastrophe in this area. A lack of attention to this vacant housing stock has a ripple effect of deteriorating housing conditions and a corresponding decrease in property values for both the abandoned home as well as neighboring properties.

The area also is undergoing a population transformation. According to the *2007 Survey of Loudoun County Residents*, 61.3% of residents have lived in the County for 10 years or less and their participation in local planning efforts has been limited; it takes time and stability to bring about a sense of community. Many existing neighborhoods in Eastern Loudoun are becoming increasingly diverse, bringing a new set of expectations, attitudes, and heritage to a once homogeneous community. Ethnic groups, including African-Americans, Asians, and Hispanics, now represent over 22% of the population in Loudoun County.

As new development continues to the west, the area's roads are becoming increasingly congested. Historically, there was little planning or investment in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections within the community. Today, with a growing acceptance of alternative means of travel and rising energy costs, the lack of safe pedestrian connections and reliable transit is a mounting concern.

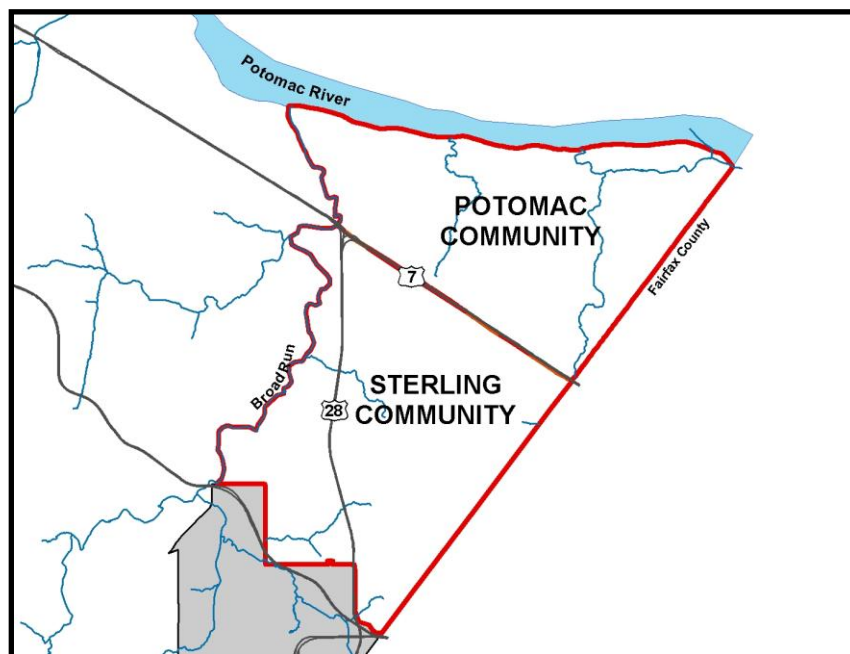
The Board of Supervisors has recognized that a response to these unique challenges requires unique solutions. In early February of 2008, the Board initiated the Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project. The purpose of the project was three-fold:

- ✓ Engage a diverse and large cross-section of the citizens and stakeholders within the communities of Potomac and Sterling in a public dialogue to capture their key issues and concerns, along with their suggested opportunities and solutions;
- ✓ Ensure a collaborative and "citizen-driven" approach where the issues and topics are defined by the citizens and stakeholders participating in the process; and
- ✓ Report the results of the public dialogue back to the Board to assist in their decision-making about future efforts in Potomac and Sterling.

The Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project and its Relationship to the Revised General Plan

The Revised General Plan is the foundation of Loudoun County's planning efforts. The plan contains policies for the purpose of not only guiding new growth and development, but also of promoting the overall health, safety, and welfare of the County's residents and the public. These policies identify preferred development patterns based on geographic planning areas. The 60,000-acre Suburban Policy Area is the easternmost area where most residential and commercial growth has occurred over the last 20 years. Future residential development will continue in much the same pattern in the Suburban Policy Area with suburban densities and smaller pockets of higher density planned along major transportation corridors, within major employment centers, and in other strategic locations.

Within the Suburban Policy Area are the four communities of Ashburn, Dulles, Potomac, and Sterling. Policies defining these four communities were established, with extensive citizen involvement during the development of the Revised General Plan, to guide the growth, development and revitalization of the Suburban Policy Area. Each community is envisioned as a mix of residential, commercial, and employment uses, along with a full complement of public services, facilities, and open spaces. Major environmental features and roads define the boundaries between communities. Thus, the geographic boundaries of the Potomac and Sterling Communities include the Broad Run to the west, the Fairfax County line on the east, and Route 7 between the two.



The Revised General Plan calls for the development of Community Plans to guide the growth of each community. Since each community is distinct in its character and set of challenges, each Community Plan will differ in its approach and objectives. Most of the new residential development within the Suburban Policy Area is occurring within the Ashburn and Dulles communities located to the west of the Broad Run. With the exception of the Route 28 corridor, the Potomac and Sterling communities are, for the most part, built-out. According to Loudoun County projections, the population within the Sterling Community is forecast to increase by just over 3,000 residents over the next twenty years, and the Potomac Community is expected to increase by approximately 1,000 residents over that same time period. With the exception of the Route 28 corridor where economic growth is expected to continue, the Potomac and Sterling Community Plans focus will primarily be on revitalization and enhancement activities.

The Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project was envisioned by the Board of Supervisors as the first phase of larger Community Plan processes. The purpose of the project was to capture the key issues and concerns of citizens and stakeholders within the Potomac and Sterling communities, along with suggested opportunities and solutions. These findings and suggestions are helping the Board of Supervisors identify the framework for the development of strategies that may lead to any number of initiatives, including:

- Specific Area and Corridor Plans;
- New and enhanced programs and services;
- Priority public investments;
- Leveraging of additional revenues;
- Strategic planning efforts by various County agencies; and
- Opening of new channels of communication between the County and area residents.

II. Project Process



The Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project was an 8-month public process. No planning effort can be successful without first meeting with and listening to the people most likely to be impacted by the results. To that end, the Board of Supervisors has consistently and continuously emphasized an outreach strategy that is designed to increase the opportunity for a diverse cross-section of the public to engage in the process – thereby reflecting a citizen-driven, bottom-up approach. The information, ideals, and solutions offered by citizens and stakeholders provide the basis for strategies that will best reflect the needs and desires of its citizens.

The project process focused on three areas: Research, Preparation and Education; Stakeholder Engagement; and Stakeholder Communication. The following are the activities conducted to date.

Research, Preparation, and Education

The Department of Planning was directed by the Board of Supervisors to take the staff lead on the community outreach project. Data research and collection efforts related to Potomac and Sterling was undertaken to fully understand the existing conditions of each community. Activities included field visits to survey existing land uses, photographing the area, researching applicable literature and websites, interviewing local officials and internal County staff, and reviewing historical information. The Department of Planning also established a Technical Review Team comprised of staff from various County departments and members of outside agencies that administer programs and services within the two communities on a day-to-day basis. The Technical Review Team helped to

assemble existing plans, documents, and studies, along with program information included in the Existing Conditions Reports described below. Finally, one-on-one interviews with members of the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission were conducted to identify their key issues and concerns, along with their expectations for the project.

*The **Technical Review Team** included staff from the Loudoun County Departments of Building & Development; Capital Construction; Economic Development; Environmental Health; Family Services; Management & Financial Services; Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management; General Services; Library Services; Mapping and Geographic Information; Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse Services; Parks, Recreation, and Community Service; Public Information; Solid Waste Management; and Transportation Services, as well as from the outside agencies of Loudoun Water; Loudoun County Public Schools; Sheriff's Office; and the Virginia Department of Transportation.*

The information collected was included into an Existing Conditions Report for each community. The reports provide a snapshot of the existing conditions of each community including: natural and cultural features, current land uses, zoning, infrastructure, transportation networks, public facilities, population, housing, employment, and economic development. The reports are posted on the project web page at www.loudoun.gov/potomac-sterling for citizens and other stakeholders to use as an information resource.



Stakeholder Input

Public Meetings

More than 300 people participated in four public meetings. Two sessions were held in the Potomac Community (River Bend and Seneca Ridge Middle Schools) and two in the Sterling Community (Park View High School) at different dates and times in order to give citizens flexibility in their attendance. Each session included a brief staff presentation highlighting characteristics of the communities. Participants then broke into small groups for a series of hands-on exercises that focused on identifying major assets and key issues, along with opportunities and solutions, to address those issues. A member of Leadership Loudoun, a nonprofit organization that engages and develops leaders within Loudoun County, facilitated each small group. The meeting concluded with each group reporting out their findings. An open house was held prior to the start of each meeting where a gallery



provided participants the opportunity to view maps and documents pertinent to their community.

Community Survey

The Potomac/Sterling Community Survey was released to the public on April 22, 2008 and open for a period of 40 days. The survey was closed on May 31, 2008. The survey, provided in both English and Spanish, solicited public input to supplement the information gathered at the public sessions and provide an alternate means for the public to provide comments. The survey captured citizens' key issues and concerns, their ideas for addressing these concerns, and their perceptions of key community assets. The survey was available on the Internet and at three public facilities – Cascades Library, Sterling Library, and Claude Moore Park. The following notes represent a sampling of the information taken from the survey.

- 551 surveys were received with approximately 3,000 written comments;
- 61% of the survey respondents were from the Sterling Community, 31% from the Potomac Community, 6% with interests in both communities;
- Almost 40% of respondents have lived in the community less than 10 years, and 56% greater than 10 years;
- 50% of the survey respondents were between the ages of 35 to 54 and 35% of the respondents were 55 and older. No respondents were between the ages of 18-24;
- English was the primary language spoken in 88% of the homes of respondents and Spanish was the primarily language spoken in 4% of the homes of respondents; and
- The largest number of respondents reported an average household size of 1-2 persons (48%), with the second largest number reported an average household size of 3-4 persons (35%). An average household size of 5-6 persons was reported by 9% of the respondents and 2% reported an average household size of 7 or more persons.

In addition to the surveys (see discussion below), and in keeping with the primary goal of the effort to reach as many people as possible, a number of stakeholder meetings and roundtables were held with various groups to ensure a diverse cross-section of the public was included in the input. The public input process is designed for outreach to any and all groups at their request. Towards this end, small roundtable meetings were held throughout the summer of 2008 with several HOAs, youth organizations, and those groups with less accessibility such as seniors and non-English speaking persons. Citizens and stakeholders were also encouraged throughout the process to provide written comments via e-mail.

Stakeholder Communication

On-going communication with the public is essential to ensuring a transparent and open process. A stakeholders list, initially starting from suggestions provided by members of the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and the project Technical Review Team, has grown to become a network of over 700 stakeholders including organizations representing faith groups, schools (including parent-teacher organizations), businesses, home-owner associations and civic organizations. The list is also a vehicle to provide stakeholders with project updates and meeting schedules. Staff continues to add stakeholder names to the list.

Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project – Workplan

PHASE/ACTIVITY	February-March	April-May	June-July	August-September	October-November
RESEARCH & EDUCATION					
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT					
-Website					
-Community Surveys					
-Public Sessions					
PRELIMINARY REPORT					
ROUNDTABLES					
FINAL REPORT					

▲ = Board Meeting ● = Public Meeting

The following sections include a summary of the information, ideas, and solutions offered by stakeholders to date on the Potomac/Sterling Outreach Project (see Workplan above). This report is a broad review and interpretation of comments received. A more in-depth summary of the survey and its results is provided in Attachment 1. The emerging themes and recommendations from the community outreach process have been incorporated into a series of action-oriented community objectives and strategies provided in a final report to the Board of Supervisors. This final report is available on-line at www.loudoun.gov/potomac-sterling.

III. Preliminary Results

Major Assets

Assets are the physical places (also known as landmarks), community characteristics and people that citizens value in their communities. Often, problems facing communities overshadow the assets. Assets can be a foundation to strengthen communities, building on their capacity to create a sense of place and association as a means to address challenges.

Today, over 74,000 people choose to call the communities of Potomac and Sterling their home. Thousands more shop and work there on a daily basis. For those reasons described above, stakeholders were asked to identify the places, people and characteristics they valued the most within their neighborhoods and the larger community. Top among these were: 1.) Proximity and accessibility of residents to jobs, services, and retail, 2.) The sense of community, 3.) The amount and quality of the area's parks, trails, and open spaces, and 4.) Quality public schools and libraries, in that order.

Proximity & Accessibility to Jobs, Services, and Retail

“Everything is close. There is so much in my backyard.”

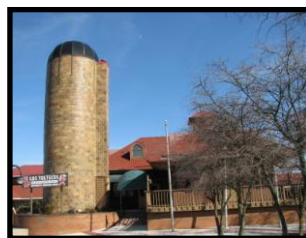
A majority of stakeholders commented on the convenience of having so many jobs, services, and shopping options within close proximity. Combined, the Potomac and Sterling Communities offer a mix of complementary retail stores, employment, public facilities, and parks to serve the residents;

“The community offers comfort and convenience of life with good public schools, jobs, and resources within a few minutes drive”

Overall Existing Land Use Mix – Potomac and Sterling Combined

Land Use	Potomac	Sterling	Overall
Residential including HOA land	60.1%	28%	44%
Office	0.6%	7%	4%
Industrial	0.2%	13%	7%
Commercial/Retail	1.8%	10%	6%
Public/Civic	21.3%	10%	16%
Vacant	16.0%	32%	24%
Total	100%	100%	100%

The residential character of the Potomac Community is balanced by the amount of office, industrial, and commercial retail business both existing and planned within the Sterling Community.



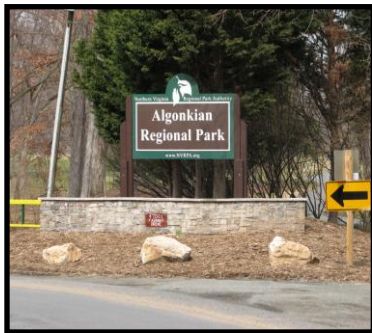
Residents enjoy their proximity to jobs and retail. From left, Loudoun Tech Center, AOL, CountrySide Marketplace with its distinctive silo, & Dulles Town Center.

- ✓ Stakeholders value the diversity of employment opportunities available within a short commuting distance of their homes. In 2007, 37% of the County's total jobs, employing approximately 54,000 people, were located in the Potomac and Sterling Communities and there are four jobs located there for every household in Sterling (a 4:1 ratio).
- ✓ Over 6 million square feet of retail are located within the two communities. Stakeholders note the diverse shopping options, including plentiful and culturally diverse restaurants and grocers. Stakeholders often cited the Route 7 corridor as a destination for shopping and eating. A number of individual shopping venues are identified as landmarks in the community, including Cascades Marketplace, CountrySide Marketplace, Regal Plaza, Sterling Park Shopping Center, Wegman's, Belfort Park, Potomac Run Center, Great Falls Plaza and Loudoun Tech Center.
- ✓ The majority of stakeholders consider Dulles Town Center a major landmark and asset. Dulles Town Center is a master-planned mixed-use community that includes a 1.2 million square-foot, 2-story enclosed mall with surrounding freestanding retail stores, offices, and housing.
- ✓ Stakeholders value the area's road network, accessibility to the major transportation corridors of Route 7, Route 28, and the Dulles Greenway, and the transportation improvements in progress on Route 28 to create a limited access roadway. According to a number of stakeholders, accessibility to this transportation network:
 - Makes commuting to jobs within Loudoun County and major employment centers located in Fairfax County and Washington D.C. more manageable than other areas of the region;
 - Provides access to alternative transportation options, including Washington Dulles International Airport and metro stations located along the Orange Line;
 - Provides proximity to shopping centers located in Tysons Corner, Reston Town Center, and Herndon; and
 - Provides access to Washington D.C. with its world-class cultural venues and theatres.

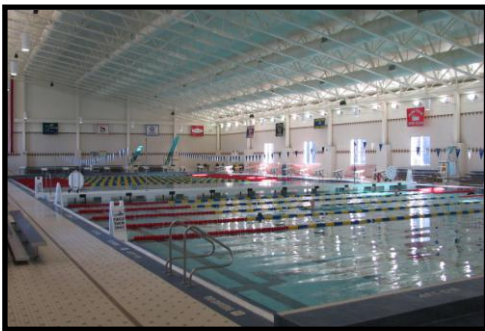
Sense of Community

- ✓ Stakeholders value the sense of community and “small-town” feel that the neighborhoods in Potomac and Sterling provide for them. Stakeholders identified as assets the well-established neighborhoods with diverse housing choices, an area with a character that is different from many of the newer developments in Ashburn, and the close relationships many residents have formed with their neighbors.
- ✓ Several stakeholders cited as an asset the area’s diverse and ethnic and economically-mixed neighborhoods and their appreciation and celebration of its diverse residents.

Parks, Trails, Open Space & Historic Resources



- ✓ Stakeholders appreciate the area’s large number and quality of the parks, trails, and open space.
- ✓ Many stakeholders note the beauty of the area, with its “*country quality*” of natural wooded areas, mature trees, and the Potomac River.
- ✓ The relative proximity of the two communities to the more rural and mountainous areas of the Shenandoah Valley and the countryside of western Loudoun County is also cited as a major asset to living in Potomac and Sterling.
- ✓ Claude Moore Park, Algonkian Regional Park/Potomack Lakes Sportsplex, and the 45-mile W&OD Trail, a segment of which runs through the Sterling Community, are most frequently identified as prominent landmarks.
- ✓ Other parks frequently mentioned as assets include Briar Patch Park, the Sterling Park Golf and Swim Club, the Lower Loudoun Little League athletic fields (Bill Allen, Bill Washington, and Jack Jennings Fields), and the W&OD Trail.
- ✓ The Potomac River and the Broad Run and its tributaries are cited by many stakeholders as significant natural landmarks.
- ✓ The remaining segments of Vestals’ Gap Road, Broad Run Toll House (at the southwest intersection of Route 7 and 28), Old Sterling Rail Station, and Old Sterling Cemetery were identified by stakeholders as important historic landmarks.
- ✓ Two places in the Sterling Community were called out by stakeholders as special landmarks – the war memorial and surrounding park located at the intersection of Holly Avenue and Sterling Boulevard and the Knights of Columbus “Barn” on Holly Avenue.



From top - Algonkian Regional Park, Claude Moore Park, W&OD

Community Facilities

- ✓ Schools are identified by stakeholders as the area's biggest asset. Stakeholders noted the quality of the public schools and their dedicated staff and liked the fact that neighborhoods are organized around schools, providing opportunities for children to walk. They also value the smaller school sizes - feeling they are not as overcrowded as the public schools immediately to their west.
- ✓ Stakeholders appreciate the libraries that serve the two communities - the Sterling Library and Community Center and the Cascades Library. Stakeholders pointed out that the libraries are especially welcoming and family-friendly.
- ✓ Stakeholders value the number of universities within the area. Many stakeholders identify the universities along the Route 7 corridor as landmarks within the community. Route 7 is becoming "*university row*" – a corridor of higher learning to the benefit of many graduating high school seniors, residents and those who work nearby. Such universities include:

- **Northern Virginia Center of Old Dominion University:** a state-supported regional university designed to meet the needs of adults and working professionals offering undergraduate (upper-level classes), graduate, certificate, and professional development programs;

- **George Washington University:** The university's flagship research and technology campus that also supports the development and growth of the technology sector in the Washington, DC region and beyond;

- **George Mason University, Loudoun Campus:** providing courses that introduce the Loudoun-area workforce and residents to study in a number of areas, offers current students a local option toward completion of degree program requirements, and course work in nursing, health science, education, social work, information technology, and management, along with undergraduate general education courses.;



**Northern Virginia
Community College**

- **Northern Virginia Community College, Loudoun Campus:** offering over 40 different degree, certificate, and continuing education and workforce development programs with programs in Occupational Technical Education, College Transfer, General Education, and developmental studies, including English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL). The Campus is also home to several unique programs of study, including horticulture technology, historic preservation, veterinary technology, web casting audio, and web design; and
- **Strayer University:** offering undergraduate and graduate programs in fields such as accounting, business, education, health services administration, information systems, and public administration.

Key Issues

Stakeholders expressed the largest number of comments for the Key Issues affecting their neighborhoods and communities. The top concerns identified are: 1.) Decline in the appearance and conditions of neighborhoods and housing, 2.) Increase in crime and gangs, 3.) Transportation congestion and lack of connectivity, 4.) Community change due to the influx of ethnic groups and illegal immigrants, and 5.) Overcrowding, in that order. As such, the Key Issues identified by stakeholders can be captured under five broad categories:

- Quality of Life
- Community Change
- Transportation, Mobility & Linkage
- Community Facilities & Programs
- Land Use and Economic Development

Quality of Life

The majority of stakeholder comments by far reflect concerns about the decline in the quality of life within their neighborhoods and communities, and a fear that the decline is encouraging long-time residents to move out, threatening property values and encouraging disinvestment and blight. Other stakeholders fear that the quality of life issues experienced in some neighborhoods will spillover into theirs. Below are highlights of the most frequent comments cited by stakeholders.



Neighborhood & Housing Conditions

- ✓ The decline in the appearance of neighborhoods and conditions of homes is the most frequent Quality of Life issue cited by stakeholders. Stakeholders, especially within Sterling Park and Sugarland Run, describe what they see as an overall decline in the appearance and conditions of neighborhoods and housing in the area, along with a steady lowering of standards of how people treat their homes. Frequently mentioned problems include deteriorating housing facades, unkempt houses and lawns, and trash and junk in yards such as construction and landscape materials.

- ✓ Stakeholders cite the high rate of foreclosures as one reason for the decline in neighborhood appearance and housing conditions. Residents are concerned that foreclosures are destroying their home investments and decreasing home values. Residents noted that foreclosed properties are leading to the deterioration of homes, including broken windows, unkempt lawns with high grass that in turn are attracting rodents, vandalism, and break-ins. It was also noted that Home Owner Associations are not able to maintain properties that are foreclosed and HOA's are losing thousands of dollars in HOA fees from the increase in vacant housing.
- ✓ Many stakeholders describe poor maintenance of streets and common areas where debris is often left on the side of roads.

Overcrowding & Parking

- ✓ The second biggest quality of life issue cited by stakeholders is overcrowding. Stakeholders are increasingly concerned about what they observe as an increase in the number of homes where multiple families and a large number of unrelated individuals are living together in effect illegally converting townhomes and single-family detached homes and garages into "boarding houses".
- ✓ Stakeholders note that evidence of overcrowding can be seen by the number of vehicles parked in yards and on the street. Large number of cars parked on streets, according to many stakeholders, creates major congestion and constitutes a safety hazard for the provision of fire and rescue services.
- ✓ A few stakeholders noted that townhomes are not providing sufficient parking for residents and guests, as evidenced by an overabundance of vehicles in the area.

"Crime is a concern – we hear about things happening at the Sterling Park shopping mall, which is not far away from us. Luckily, we have wonderful neighbors and we watch out for one another"

Public Safety

- ✓ An increase in crime is the second most frequently cited issue by stakeholders. Comments reflect a feeling that neighborhoods and shopping centers are unsafe and the belief that there is too little law enforcement presence and/or neighborhood volunteer watch groups in the area to address the issue of rising crime. Stakeholders cite rises in crime related to vandalism, graffiti, larceny and burglary.
- ✓ Stakeholders believe there is increasing gang activity due to newcomers to the community and the populations to the east. There is a concern that this activity is infiltrating schools and neighborhoods with a resultant rise in crime and gang-related graffiti.
- ✓ Stakeholders note the increase in foreclosures and vacant housing is inviting crime.
- ✓ Some stakeholders commented they are afraid to walk after dark and will not let their children move freely within the neighborhood because of a lack of lighting.
- ✓ For those who believe that crime has not yet entered their neighborhoods, they fear that crime from other areas in eastern Loudoun will "spillover".

- ✓ Specific places identified as crime areas include the areas surrounding Seneca Ridge and Dominion High School, Sterling Park Shopping Center, Sterling Library and Community Center, Briar Patch Park, Sugarland Run Shopping Center, and Regal Plaza.

Lack of Enforcement and Support

- ✓ Stakeholders believe there has been a lack of a response from the County to enforce the zoning and nuisance violations that are impacting the health, safety and welfare on individuals and their neighborhoods.
- ✓ Some stakeholders state that eastern Loudoun is the County's "stepchild" and feel the County pays little attention to residents' needs. Despite the fact they pay taxes, they see little neighborhood reinvestment and improvements coming back into their communities.
- ✓ Many stakeholders expressed the view that the public and media only report on the negative aspects of the communities, which in turn leads to their perception from others as the "poor" and "run-down" section" of the County.

Community Change

The Key Assets identified what people value in their neighborhoods and communities. These assets are what make communities attractive for new residents who are moving into the area. These newer residents are more economically and ethnically diverse. While many appreciate this diversity, there are also many who believe these newcomers are responsible for the loss in their quality of life.

- ✓ The largest numbers of stakeholders concerned with community change believe that the Potomac and Sterling communities are becoming a haven for foreign-born, illegal immigrants. Stakeholders believe illegal immigrants are responsible for a number of issues, including increased crime, gangs, overcrowding, foreclosures, the loss of jobs and services from legal citizens, a lack of respect for their neighbors, and a general lowering of community standards that are ultimately causing a negative impact on their property values.
- ✓ An equal number of stakeholders believe there is growing number of non-English speaking Hispanics and other recent immigrants, which are creating language barriers that make it difficult to communicate. Stakeholder concerns include the number of bilingual signs in the area, increases in Hispanic business, growing numbers of workers in businesses who do not speak English, County resources needed for English as a Second Language classes, and lack of integration into the community.
- ✓ Stakeholders are concerned that the amount of affordable housing in the area, exacerbated by the housing slump, will continue to bring an influx of low-income people and renters into the area which in turn will further crime, blight, and other issues affecting their quality of life.

- ✓ Some stakeholders are concerned that the increasingly transient nature of the population, along with the increase of dual income working families and the amount of time that workers have to spend commuting on heavily congested roads is resulting in a general lack of involvement in community activities and events.

Transportation, Mobility & Linkage

“At one time I could make it to DC in 32 minutes or Leesburg in 10”

The quote above reflects the feeling of many stakeholders – that traffic congestion is a big problem in eastern Loudoun County. Traffic congestion and bicycle and pedestrian connectivity were the top transportation concerns listed by stakeholders. They also cited a number of additional concerns related to transportation, including poor bicycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility, and insufficient investments in public transportation.

Traffic Congestion



Route 7

- ✓ Although stakeholders value the diversity of employment opportunities and shopping options along Routes 7 and 28 and their accessibility to major destinations outside the County, they are increasingly concerned about the level of traffic congestion in the area. Roads identified as problems with congestion include commuter routes such as Routes 7 and 28, Algonkian Parkway, Sterling Boulevard, Cascades Parkway, West Holly Road, Lincoln Road, and the intersection of Route 28 and Waxpool Road.
- ✓ Two factors cited by stakeholders that contribute to traffic congestion include traffic generated by residential growth to the west that is bringing commuters and others to and through eastern Loudoun County and the lack of a complete road network. Stakeholders note the area’s lack of east-west road corridors, especially Gloucester Parkway and Russell Branch Parkway, forcing vehicles onto Route 7.
- ✓ Stakeholders note that a lack of road and street connectivity is forcing cut-through traffic into residential neighborhoods like Dominion Station, where vehicles are using Magnolia Road to travel between Atlantic Boulevard and Church Road, and where accessibility to business areas such as the Belfort Park district is limited.

Traffic Safety

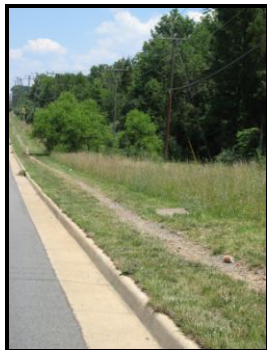
- ✓ The second biggest transportation issue cited by stakeholders is traffic safety. Stakeholders are concerned about safety within segments of the road network and at specific intersections. The specific roads or road segments mentioned by stakeholders as a concern for speeding include:
 - Algonkian Parkway;
 - Palisades Parkway between Cascades Parkway and Potomac View Road;

- Cascades Parkway;
- Potomac View Road between Jefferson Drive and Hampshire Station;
- South Cottage Road;
- Youngs Cliff Road in Broad Run Farms;
- Beech Road;
- South Lincoln Drive; and
- Sterling Boulevard.

✓ Stakeholders identified a number of dangerous intersections along Route 7 including those at Potomac View Road, Sterling Boulevard-Cardinal Glen Drive and the entrance into Cascades Village Apartments. Additional unsafe intersections identified include:

- Cottage Road at Sugarland Run Drive and Potomac View Road;
- Benedict Drive and Potomac View Road; and
- A number of intersections along Algonkian Parkway including intersections with Lowes Island Boulevard, Falcon's Landing Circle, entrances to Potomac Falls High & River Bend Middle Schools, and Countryside Boulevard.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity, Safety & Accessibility



**Dirt path along
Cascades Parkway**



**Worn crosswalk at
Algonkian Parkway and
Lowes Island Boulevard.**

✓ Stakeholders describe the lack of an integrated network of sidewalks, multi-use trails, and bike lanes that connect neighborhoods together and connect to major use destinations such as libraries, schools, community centers, parks, shopping centers, and places of employment. Comments included:

- The absence of bike lanes on paved roadways;
- Disconnected walking trails in Cascades;
- Absence of sidewalks along Palisades Parkway to link the surrounding residential areas to Cascades Marketplace, the Cascades Library, and the Senior Center; and
- The need for north-south bicycle and pedestrian facilities to access major parks and trails, including Algonkian Park, Bles Park, Potomac Heritage Trail, Claude Moore Park, and the W&OD.

✓ Stakeholders noted that where sidewalks do exist many are only on one side of the road or are in poor condition, causing pedestrians to walk in the street. It was also noted that many of the sidewalks in older communities like Sterling Park are old and narrow; not wide enough to accommodate pedestrians with limited mobilities.

✓ Many stakeholders are concerned about the unsafe walking environment and significant barriers to safe pedestrian crossings on higher speed roads like

Algonkian Parkway, Palisades Parkway, Cascades Parkway, Potomac View Road, and Sterling Boulevard. Route 7 is frequently cited as an example of a road where pedestrians cannot safely cross to reach retail and other destinations, particularly at Lakeland Drive, Sterling Boulevard, Campus Drive, Potomac View Road, and Countryside Boulevard.

- ✓ Some stakeholders are also concerned about the lack of street lighting at intersections in the Sterling Park neighborhood and along Algonkian Parkway decreasing the visibility of pedestrians at night. Two recent pedestrian fatalities occurred at the intersection of Algonkian Parkway and Countryside Boulevard.

Public Transportation

- ✓ While voicing their appreciation for local bus service, stakeholders note that it is inconvenient - routes do not connect to major uses and destinations in the County and have infrequent scheduled stops, service is not accessible for many residents, including seniors.
- ✓ Stakeholders mentioned the absence of route maps or schedules within the bus shelters and difficulty in knowing where bus stops are located along routes.
- ✓ Stakeholder comments indicate a lack of awareness that local bus service exists or that “7 to 7 on 7” does connect to the Fairfax Connector bus system at the Town Center Plaza shopping center at Route 7 and Dranesville Road. Those who make the effort noted that transfer connections, and the length of time it takes to travel to destinations in Fairfax County, make the journey arduous.
- ✓ Some stakeholders believe the County’s lack of a metro rail service makes the area less desirable to live, given the increasingly long commutes and traffic congestion within the region.

The diversity of issues below were not raised as frequently as the quality of life, community, and transportation issues described above. They nevertheless represent the concerns of a number of stakeholders in the two communities.

Community Facilities & Programs

Stakeholder concerns spanned a wide range of community facilities. Listed below are some of the more frequent comments:

- ✓ Lack of disability services for young adults, including programs, facilities, and work opportunities and a perception that the County does not care about the disabled community;
- ✓ Perceived lack of support for refurbishing the Sterling Library and Community Center – a need for more space and for improved ADA accommodations;
- ✓ Insufficient number of senior centers in the area;
- ✓ Lack of a dedicated teen center for middle-school aged and latch-key youth to attend, especially on the weekends;

- ✓ Need for a fire and rescue facility near the Route 28 and 7 interchange and a concern about the viability of the Sterling Volunteer Fire and Rescue Companies in light of decreased donations and volunteers;
- ✓ Need to maintain the quality of schools in the area and to upgrade older facilities such as Park View High School and Sully Elementary School;
- ✓ Overcrowding of soccer fields; and
- ✓ Deficiencies in the number of tot lots and pocket parks in Sterling.

Land Use & Economic Development

Land Use:

- ✓ Stakeholders, particularly in Sterling, are concerned about continued development in the area and wish to see growth focused on areas further west. There is the fear that too much development or overdevelopment will bring more people into the area and increase residential densities.
- ✓ Some stakeholders believe the County plans support building and clearing/tearing down residential areas.
- ✓ Some stakeholders commented that commercial development planned along the Route 28 corridor should be placed elsewhere in the County.

Business Development

- ✓ Stakeholders note that Loudoun County remains a bedroom community in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area and feel that the County is not attracting the type of quality employers, including high tech industry, that provide higher paying jobs. There is a perception that quality employers are leaving the County and that economic growth seems to have slowed.
- ✓ Other concerns mentioned by stakeholders are the incomplete development of the Dulles Town Center and various developments that have not been built-out, the amount of flex-industrial in the area, and the imbalance between higher end jobs and retail, i.e., too much retail.
- ✓ Stakeholders question the single-use, office park districts currently planned for Keynote Employment along Route 28 and 625 and whether they can attract businesses without providing the amenities desired by future employers.
- ✓ Some stakeholders believe the County is not “business-friendly” to small business and that the focus has been more on large corporations. One example cited was the lack of adequate parking for smaller businesses along Carpenter Drive.

Commercial Retail and Entertainment:

- ✓ Stakeholders are concerned about empty storefronts, businesses replaced by short-lived, lower quality retail, and the general decline of area shopping centers.
- ✓ Two areas frequently identified as declining are the three shopping centers constituting the Sterling Park Shopping Center – Sterling Plaza, Sterling Town

Center, and the Sterling Park Shopping Mall – and Sugarland Square Shopping Center. The Sterling Plaza Shopping Center was cited by several stakeholders as aging and in decline. There were comments that the center is poorly designed, looks to be in disrepair, contains vacant storefronts, is considered unsafe, and the buildings face away from the streets and sidewalks – turning their back onto the community.

- ✓ Stakeholders also note that Route 7 is the gateway into Loudoun County, but it contains too many strip malls with large building setbacks and excessive amounts of parking. Other entrances, including the Sterling Park area of Route 7 and Sterling Boulevard and the intersection of Route 7 and 28, were identified as additional places in need of improvement.
- ✓ Additional comments from stakeholders included concern about under-utilized retail in the Belfort Park area, vacant storefronts on Cascades Parkway south of Rt. 7, and the need for a more defined center at Dulles Town Center besides the indoor mall.

Opportunities and Solutions

Stakeholders provided input regarding opportunities and solutions to address many of the key issues identified above. From their comments and suggestions, nine themes are emerging. These themes are:

Neighborhood and Housing Revitalization
Transportation and Land Use Corridor Improvements
Expanding and Enhancing Transportation Choices
Economic Development
Development Patterns
Housing Affordability and Diversity
Community Facilities and Programs
Parks and Open Space
Environment

The highest number of suggested opportunities and solutions fall under “Neighborhood and Housing Revitalization”. A large number of stakeholders also commented on “Transportation and Land Use Corridor Improvements” and “Expanding and Enhancing Transportation Choices”. Although offered less frequently, the themes of “Economic Development”, “Development Patterns”, “Housing Affordability and Diversity”, “Community Facilities and Programs”, “Parks and Open Space” and “Environment” include comments from a number of stakeholders.

The following is documentation of stakeholder suggestions only. Comments have not been assessed to determine whether the County is currently working or funding any of the suggestions provided. The final report of the Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project will include such an analysis.

Neighborhood and Housing Revitalization

Quality of Life/Enforcement:

- ✓ Conduct proactive measures to enforce County zoning/building codes and public nuisance laws, including a zoning “Swat” team
- ✓ Strict enforcement of housing occupancy limits, property maintenance, illegal structures and home-based businesses, for both residential and business property owners
- ✓ Improving the zoning complaint process
- ✓ Establish a notification system for houses under foreclosure so residents can monitor suspicious activity
- ✓ Accountability for violations by increasing fines
- ✓ County maintenance of overgrown lawns with cost recovery efforts applied to property owners
- ✓ Review and revise the County’s overcrowding ordinance
- ✓ Restrict the parking of vehicles on lawns
- ✓ Restrict or eliminate the on-street parking of cars, commercial vehicles, and trailers in residential neighborhoods and enforce violations. In addition to banning commercial vehicles, stakeholders suggested prohibiting overnight parking and restricting parking to one-side of the street
- ✓ Restrict solicitation at major intersections
- ✓ Increase parking patrols
- ✓ Enforce teen curfews
- ✓ Establish neighborhood watch groups
- ✓ Provide night-time and weekend staffing of the County’s community policing program to supplement the work done by daytime officers
- ✓ Place a greater police presence in troublesome areas such as Sterling Plaza Shopping Center and residential neighborhood side streets
- ✓ Invest in additional Sheriff substations and consider placing in HOA clubhouses
- ✓ Create an auxiliary police program
- ✓ Install a camera surveillance system in crime areas
- ✓ Limit illegal immigrants’ access to County services and penalize employers who hire them
- ✓ Partner and cooperate with federal immigration authorities, including the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to enforce laws regarding illegal immigrants
- ✓ Develop stronger local legislation aimed at illegal immigration and gang activity
- ✓ Proactively check the immigration status of anyone arrested in the County who is suspected of committing certain crimes

Housing Revitalization:

- ✓ Educate homeowners (and business owners) and create a resource guide on home maintenance and County ordinances and regulations

- ✓ Invest in programs that help homeowners avoid foreclosure
- ✓ Establish a County program that assists County employees, seniors and middle class families with buying and renovating homes, including foreclosed homes
- ✓ Establish a County buying program that buys foreclosed properties for the development of group homes for the developmentally disabled
- ✓ Identify clusters of foreclosed homes that may be considered for development at higher density housing
- ✓ Use public funds to clean up properties after abandonment
- ✓ Provide more multi-family housing opportunities to reduce demand for conversions of single-family housing (into apartments)

Building Community:

- ✓ Create an organization, volunteer board, or public/private partnership that functions like an HOA for Sterling Park, enforces quality of life issues, educates the public on good stewardship, instills pride into the community, and promotes Sterling Park as a good place to live
- ✓ Establish an HOA coalition as a conduit for information sharing and collaboration between County and community
- ✓ Conduct grantmaking activities for model neighborhood initiatives
- ✓ Hold more neighborhood events and teen activities to engender neighborhood spirit
- ✓ Collaborate with schools, community leaders and local businesses to create a sense of community
- ✓ Increase/broaden community outreach with Hispanic population
- ✓ Continue supporting and expanding Sterlingfest and Sterling Playmakers
- ✓ Hold additional events through the year such as a Columbus Day parade
- ✓ Conduct neighborhood “clean-up” days and establish an “Adopt-a-Street” program
- ✓ Develop and support neighborhood “green” initiatives
- ✓ Support non-profits active in the community
- ✓ Continue Loudoun County community dialogue initiated through the Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project – consider quarterly meetings

Transportation and Land Use Corridor Improvements

Route 7 Corridor opportunities cited by stakeholders include:

- ✓ Additional travel lanes
- ✓ Coordination with Fairfax County to widen Route 7
- ✓ Conversion to limited access roadway
- ✓ Improve North-south road connections
- ✓ Light synchronization/sensors/smart light on Route 7
- ✓ Considerations for dedicated bus lanes or rail
- ✓ Complete sidewalk network
- ✓ Bike overpasses/underpasses at NOVA and Countryside Boulevard

- ✓ Improved bicycle and pedestrian access to Dulles Town Center and shopping areas north of Route 7
- ✓ Intersection design improvements at:
 - Potomac View Road, including "No turn on red" and "No U-turns"
 - Sterling Boulevard, including a right-turn only lane
 - Cascades Village Retirement Center
 - Campus Drive
- ✓ Improve aesthetics of the Route 7 business corridor from Dranesville Rd to Countryside Boulevard, including removal of the jersey barrier wall
- ✓ Gateway improvements near the Fairfax County line and at Sterling Boulevard
- ✓ Revitalization of existing shopping centers to attract more upscale businesses and reduce vacancy rates

Sterling Boulevard corridor opportunities and solutions cited by stakeholders include:

- ✓ Street lights on Sterling Boulevard
- ✓ Intersection design improvements at Church Rd
- ✓ Improved crosswalks and other pedestrian improvements
- ✓ Pedestrian overpass at Route 7
- ✓ Plant more trees on Sterling Boulevard and Rt. 7
- ✓ Continue Sterling Boulevard beautification initiatives
- ✓ Revitalization of Sterling Plaza Shopping Center to address the need for improved traffic flow, integration into the neighborhood, and a more inviting atmosphere from Sterling Boulevard

Algonkian Parkway corridor opportunities and solutions cited by stakeholders include:

- ✓ Traffic monitoring and enforcement
- ✓ Additional traffic lights throughout Countryside
- ✓ Conversion from speedway to a multi-modal thoroughfare for bicyclists and pedestrians to safely use
- ✓ Traffic-calming designs
- ✓ Pedestrian overpass at the entrance to River Bend Middle School and Potomac Falls High School
- ✓ Intersection design improvements for pedestrian safety, including Hardwood Forest Drive, Falcons Landing, and Lowes Island Boulevard

Route 28 corridor opportunities and solutions cited by stakeholders include:

- ✓ Completion of the Route 28 parallel roads of Atlantic and Pacific Boulevard
- ✓ Additional east-west roads over Route 28 to ease congestion
- ✓ Improve accessibility and visibility of the Belfort Park area
- ✓ Plan for amenities to support and encourage Class A regional office and high-end jobs

- ✓ Plan for the highest and best uses to bring higher-end jobs, employ local people and expand the tax base
- ✓ Encourage medium-sized businesses along Route 28 to employ/support local people

Expanding and Enhancing Transportation Choices

Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trail Connectivity:

- ✓ Bike lanes on major roadways, including Cascades Parkway, Palisades Parkway and Potomac View Road
- ✓ Widen existing bike paths
- ✓ Create and connect more bike paths to neighborhoods
- ✓ Bike connections from neighborhoods north of Route 7 to the W&OD, and including from Countryside over Route 7, down Atlantic Boulevard
- ✓ Walking bridge access to Maryland parks and recreational trails
- ✓ Complete a pedestrian network that considers these segments:
 - Palisades Parkway from Cascades Marketplace to Potomac View Road
 - Cascades Parkway
 - Church Road;
 - Sterling Boulevard;
 - Holly Avenue;
 - Atlantic Boulevard
 - Potomac View Road between Hampshire Station Drive and Jefferson Drive
 - Sugarland Road from Adams Center to East Frederick Drive
 - Cascades Village Retirement Community and Potomac View Drive
- ✓ Pedestrian access to Dulles Town Center
- ✓ Conduct a sidewalk inventory/assessment to identify repair and improvement needs
- ✓ Improved bicycle and pedestrian access to public facilities and transit stops
- ✓ Improved bicycle and pedestrian access to Claude Moore Park from origins east and west
- ✓ Completion of the Potomac Heritage Trail through Countryside
- ✓ Develop linear parks along major streams to connect Potomac River and W&OD

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety:

- ✓ Invest in Safe Routes to School initiatives
- ✓ Provide safer W&OD crossings
- ✓ Provide more street lighting
- ✓ Apply traffic calming around Cascades Marketplace, Palisades Parkway, Magnolia Drive and residential side streets such as Argonne

- ✓ Identify and improve intersection design for pedestrian safety and include these intersections:
 - Holley Avenue/Circle Drive/Maple Avenue corridor
 - Cascades Marketplace and Senior Center/Cascades Library;
 - Cascades Parkway and Palisades Parkway
 - Sterling Boulevard and the W&OD
 - Intersections along the Cascades Parkway corridor

Public Transportation:

- ✓ Invest more money into public transportation to encourage less reliance on the automobile
- ✓ Bring metrorail to Loudoun County
- ✓ Revert W&OD back to rail
- ✓ Provide 15-minute interval bus service
- ✓ Provide more frequent bus service, including weekends
- ✓ Expand bus routes from Ashburn to Beltway employment centers
- ✓ Provide more bus stop locations including on Algonkian and Cascades Parkway and at local landmarks/activity centers
- ✓ Plan for bus stops at Cascades Senior Center and retirement communities;
- ✓ Develop a connected grid-system of bus routes
- ✓ Plan north/south bus service
- ✓ Create an education and marketing program to encourage bus ridership
- ✓ Provide a circulator system within the community and for future metro stations – like Fairfax City’s CUE
- ✓ Provide public transportation service to stations along Washington Metrorail’s planned Silver Line
- ✓ Increase bus ticket locations
- ✓ Provide adequate parking at Park and Ride lots
- ✓ Widen roads to accommodate bus service on major roads like Potomac View
- ✓ Consider options to personal vehicles such as zip cars

Economic Development

- ✓ Attract office development in Sterling Park to expand job opportunities for residents
- ✓ Promote the start-up and expansion of smaller, local-based business types such as restaurants and service, specialty retail, and entertainment venues through tax credits, the creation of a small business incubator and other incentives
- ✓ Promote diversified and higher-end retail
- ✓ Discourage strip-retail and encourage pedestrian-oriented shopping centers like Cascades Marketplace
- ✓ Develop new or renovated town center(s) in eastern Loudoun County

- ✓ Create a planned business area in the heart of Sterling Park
- ✓ Expand entertainment options at Dulles Town Center
- ✓ Encourage the location of destination attractions that serve residents and attract dollars from the region.
- ✓ Invest in a farmers market/flea market for Sterling
- ✓ Develop a County façade improvement program for businesses
- ✓ Explore zoning and procedural incentives to streamline the approval process for new businesses locating into the County
- ✓ Develop a public relations campaign to encourage shopping in Loudoun County and Potomac and Sterling

Development Patterns

- ✓ Maintain and revitalize existing communities in place of new growth
- ✓ Reduce the rate of development in the west to lessen the impacts on existing development to the east
- ✓ Tie growth to infrastructure, including water, transportation, and tax impacts
- ✓ Create zoning regulations and districts that support pedestrian-oriented developments, open space and parks, and community identity
- ✓ Support mixed-use development where land uses are closer together
- ✓ Create incentives for urban renewal
- ✓ Discourage multi-family housing
- ✓ No more density packing
- ✓ Redistribute housing to lower residential density
- ✓ Lower zoning densities in new plans for Sterling
- ✓ Alleviate traffic by stopping sprawl and new development
- ✓ Stop growth until all the problems are fixed
- ✓ Stop approving large companies that are impacting traffic and taxing community resources
- ✓ Devise a “desired-development zone”, with rewards for developing or investing in that zone
- ✓ Use the County’s borrowing capacity for infrastructure investment

Housing Affordability and Diversity

- ✓ Increase affordable housing options
- ✓ Provide housing styles and types to attract young and new buyers in Sterling
- ✓ Develop affordable housing for seniors

Community Facilities and Programs

Facilities:

- ✓ Expand opportunities for use of schools as community spaces

- ✓ Maintain and renovate older schools such as Sully Elementary
- ✓ Playground renovation at Guilford Elementary
- ✓ Create a teen center
- ✓ Create an “Eastern Animal Care Substation” to collect and care for abandoned animals
- ✓ Stricter rules on the control of pets
- ✓ Construct a new, larger and more walkable Sterling Library like those elsewhere in the County and include a theatre, swimming pool, exercise room, and indoor tennis courts
- ✓ Rebuild the Sterling Library/Community Center at the Rolling Ridge Elementary school site and replace with a new fire/rescue/sheriff office complex
- ✓ Develop a public facility that offers arts and crafts workshops and classes, along with theatre and entertainment, and includes space for display and sales
- ✓ Consider an outdoor community center
- ✓ Remove the planned government center and school administration buildings from the County budget
- ✓ More recycling bins in public areas such as park and ride lots and community and recreation centers

Programs:

- ✓ Adopt a County program for people with disabilities of all ages
- ✓ Provide funding, access, and programs for disabled adults
- ✓ Create work opportunities, recreational, and social activities for disabled adults
- ✓ Provide Cascades Village with handicap access
- ✓ Offer full-day kindergarten for children
- ✓ Free after-school programs for preteens and teens that includes mentorship activities
- ✓ Improve school personnel training for hearing impaired, install hearing systems in classrooms, and Wilson 12 system for dyslexic students
- ✓ Develop teen mentoring programs
- ✓ Provide foreign immersion language programs and more ESOL classes
- ✓ Expand multi-lingual outreach regarding community services
- ✓ Coordinate County services and provide 24-7 access
- ✓ Assign more animal control officers
- ✓ Evaluate current public facility locations, services and fees
- ✓ More community center exercise and art classes for younger people
- ✓ Develop service and employment opportunities for youth

Parks and Open Space

- ✓ Develop an indoor playground for kids in the winter

- ✓ Construct an indoor tennis facility
- ✓ Develop an outdoor park like Burke Lake Park in Fairfax County
- ✓ Provide dog parks
- ✓ Consider an open air theatre at Claude Moore Park
- ✓ Promote the development of additional parks and open space
- ✓ Convert the parking lot behind the Hallmark store in Cascades Marketplace into a green space for summer concerts
- ✓ Provide a skate park for children

Environment

- ✓ Require better Best Management Practices (BMP's) during construction
- ✓ Encourage energy efficiency and the use of alternative energy in public buildings
- ✓ Emphasize restoration and preservation of natural areas rather than development of active recreational areas
- ✓ Campaign to promote citizen awareness of the natural environment in Loudoun County such as rivers, creeks, forests and other sensitive environmental features
- ✓ Promote environmental volunteerism
- ✓ Less destruction to the natural habitat
- ✓ Clean up the Hidden Lane Landfill and compensate those affected by it
- ✓ Explore geothermal as a means to achieving energy-independence
- ✓ Consider all “green” options in development

IV. Conclusions & Next Steps

The Board initiated the Potomac/Sterling Community Outreach Project to engage a diverse and large cross-section of the citizens and stakeholders in a public dialogue to capture their key issues and concerns, along with their suggested opportunities and solutions. These results have served as the framework for developing a number of recommended strategies for the Board to consider in working towards improving the quality of life for Potomac and Sterling, and for the citizens of Loudoun County as a whole.